

the import of American poultry as well as discriminatory regulations on chemicals used to manufacture cosmetics—both of which have detrimental effects on American farmers and producers. In addition, the delegates discussed the challenge of climate change, the importance of energy security, and joint efforts needed to address the global financial crisis.

Madam Speaker, I would like to enter into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the joint statement that was agreed upon by American and European legislators at the 65th TLD meeting in Miami. This document demonstrates the depth and breadth of the interparliamentary discussions while also highlighting the scope of excellent transatlantic cooperation.

JOINT STATEMENT OF JONATHAN EVANS, MEP, CHAIRMAN, EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DELEGATION; SHELLEY BERKLEY, CHAIRWOMAN, UNITED STATES CONGRESS DELEGATION; CLIFF STEARNS, VICE CHAIRMAN (RANKING REPUBLICAN), UNITED STATES CONGRESS DELEGATION; AND JIM COSTA, VICE CHAIRMAN, UNITED STATES CONGRESS DELEGATION AT THE 65TH MEETING OF DELEGATIONS FROM THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS, DECEMBER 2008

We, Members of the European Parliament and the United States House of Representatives, held our 65th Interparliamentary meeting (Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue) in Miami, Florida on 6-8 December 2008.

Building on the joint statement issued after our last meeting in Ljubljana, Slovenia, on 24-26 May 2008, we reiterated the importance of regular dialogue on a range of political, social and economic issues that affect all of our citizens. We welcomed the new U.S. administration and look forward to the election of a new European Parliament and European Commission next summer. We discussed ways in which to utilize this time of political change on both sides of the Atlantic to further enhance our transatlantic relations and deepen our cooperation. We confirmed that legislators on both sides of the Atlantic should increase dialogue and consultation amongst themselves in order to prevent possible conflicts in the legislative and regulatory regimes. In particular, direct and timely contacts between specialist committees within our legislatures have been valuable means of reinforcing cooperation and should be continued. We agreed to report back to the European Parliament and U.S. Congress on the content and outcome of our discussions, particularly in the areas where joint efforts are likely to result in positive outcomes.

We examined a wide array of foreign policy issues, agreeing that joint action by the European Union and the United States is the most effective way to approach many pressing international challenges. We welcomed the results of the EU-U.S. summit in Brdo, Slovenia in June 2008 and stressed the importance of the principles contained in the final declaration. In particular, we agreed that both sides should continue to demonstrate global leadership and effective transatlantic cooperation in the face of challenges such as:

Promoting international peace, stability, democracy, human rights, international criminal justice, sustainable development, the rule of law and good governance; and

Fighting terrorism while protecting the fundamental freedoms on which our democratic societies are built.

We discussed the recent terrorist attack in Mumbai, India, expressing our condolences to the families of those who lost their lives and condemning the attacks. We called on the governments of India and Pakistan to cooperate in reducing tensions in the region,

called on the government of Pakistan to participate fully in the investigation, and asked the U.S. and EU to assist in these efforts.

On Afghanistan, we recognized the need for a joint long-term strategy aimed at stabilizing the internal situation and reducing risks for regional security. We welcomed the EU's decision to expand its EUPOL police training mission from 250 to 400 personnel.

On Iran, we assessed the continuing nuclear threat. We pledged to continue our cooperative efforts to confront this challenge with a unified voice, using the dual track of diplomacy and strong sanctions. We called on transatlantic partners to continue to press Iran to comply with its UN Security Council obligations and, if needed, to move forward with additional sanctions to complement UN measures.

We assessed the August conflict between Russia and Georgia. While recognizing the importance of continuing to engage in dialogue with Russia about shared concerns, we emphasized that we cannot return to 'business as usual' while Russia continues to violate the ceasefire agreement. We stressed that Russia must implement its commitments on withdrawal of its military to pre-conflict positions and allow access by international civilian monitors to all areas in South Ossetia. We reaffirmed our continuing support for the Georgian people and our commitment to aid the country's post-conflict reconstruction. We also expressed concern about the ongoing developments in Russia's domestic and foreign policies, including provocative statements regarding missile deployment to Kaliningrad as well as about the reliability of energy deliveries to Russia's European neighbors and partners.

The TLD welcomed the recent admission of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovakia to the U.S. Visa Waiver Program. We expressed our hope that the remaining EU Member States will be eligible to join soon and that the U.S. State Department will review its administrative procedures to determine whether the visa application process can be simplified. We also discussed the importance of ensuring safe trade as well as joint efforts to combat terrorism and transnational crime. We called for the timely sharing of information among our law enforcement and intelligence agencies, emphasizing the importance of protecting individual privacy and personal data.

We stressed the positive impact and symbolic importance that would result from an early visit and address to the European Parliament by U.S. President-elect Barack Obama.

We agreed on the need for continued discussion of possible joint actions to address the effects of climate change. We also called for increasing attention to the need for energy security through the diversification of energy sources. We discussed the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, scheduled for the end of 2009, and expressed hope that a viable and effective global agreement will be reached.

Our dialogue focused on the financial crisis, particularly the ways in which it has affected the housing market, banking sector, employment and industries in Europe and the United States. We expressed support for continued cooperation between our governments in seeking to find collaborative solutions to these problems, including through the recent G-20 gathering and follow-up meetings. We took stock of the initiatives dealing with global financial instability, such as the European Economic Recovery Plan and the U.S.'s Emergency Stabilization Act of 2008.

With regard to the Transatlantic Economic Council (TEC), we noted with satisfaction the engagement of the TLD on 13 May 2008

with TEC Co-Chairs Gunther Verheugen and Dan Price in the framework of the advisory groups. We welcome the TEC as a permanent feature of the EU/U.S. relations. We look forward to engaging with the TEC at the next meeting on December 12, which will have particular importance as the last session before the change in administrations. We called on the incoming Obama Administration to take careful note of the TEC outcomes and to pledge its commitment to continuing to engage with the European Union through this important mechanism.

We welcomed the progress that has been achieved since the TEC's last meeting. We strongly supported the agreement to recognize each others' accounting standards (U.S. GAAP and EU IFRS), which will save multinational companies on both sides of the Atlantic billions of dollars in compliance costs. We applauded the joint statement committing to openness in foreign investment, greater cooperation on the enforcement of intellectual property rights (IPR), and efforts to harmonize biofuels standards. We advocated stronger involvement of legislators in contributing to and overseeing these initiatives since many of these issues involve important interests for stakeholders, such as securities regulatory regimes and the creation of a level playing field for insurance/reinsurance. A wide range of issues are also under consideration in the High Level Regulatory Forum (HLRF) and legislators should be informed in a timely manner about the results of their activities.

Several items have been identified within the TEC agenda that still require legislative consideration:

While achieving reciprocity and mutual recognition of security standards remains critically important, we continued to raise concerns about the U.S. Safe Ports Act and its 100 percent cargo scanning requirement;

We reiterated the need to facilitate a solution to the ban on imports into the EU of U.S. poultry which has undergone pathogen reduction treatment, consistent with international commitments; and

Regarding the EU's regulation on the registration of chemicals (REACH), we continued to call on the European Commission to bring forward legislation ensuring that European and U.S. producers of cosmetics are treated equitably in their requirement to register substances used in their products with the EU's chemical agency.

As we have done throughout the establishment and initial meetings of the TEC, we continued to assert that the TEC initiative should be characterized by transparency and consultation of stakeholders and we called on both Administrations to reinforce the flow of information to the TLD in advance of the TEC meetings. The relevant legislative and regulatory bodies should be aware of the transatlantic impact of proposed legislation and regulations, and understand the benefits of rapid advancements towards a barrier-free regulatory environment. A more formal role should be envisaged within TEC for the U.S. Congress and the European Parliament, in particular via TLD, so as to allow for detailed and accountable reporting of TEC results to legislators.

In conclusion, both sides renewed their commitment to make the TLD's work more relevant to the European Parliament and to the U.S. House of Representatives. Amidst a climate of transition on both sides of the Atlantic, we reaffirmed the importance of continuing to strengthen and improve our dialogue in order to realize the full potential of our interparliamentary relationship.